

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Offices**

**April 11, 2011**

**8 AM**

**MINUTES**

Present: Frank McNabb (Chair), Alexinia Baldwin, Bruce Clouette, Dennis Heffley, Jim Hintz, Betty Wexler

Guest: Board member David Lindsay

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson

**1. Call to Order**

Frank McNabb called the meeting to order at 8:05 am.

**2. Approval of Minutes from March 14, 2011**

Alexinia Baldwin made a motion to approve the March 14, 2011 minutes. Bruce Clouette seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**3. Update on Renewals**

Cynthia van Zelm passed out the list of members who had not yet renewed. Ms. van Zelm said the SBM Charitable Foundation is no longer funding memberships. Mr. Clouette suggested working with First Niagara on its involvement in the Partnership (its predecessor NewAlliance is an active member).

Mr. Hintz and Mr. Clouette agreed that it is important to continue to understand the benefits of membership and visually recognize members in Storrs Center.

David Lindsay suggested that UConn student organizations who join be given the incentive that they can be present at the Storrs Center groundbreaking. Mr. Clouette agreed and suggested a role for students at the groundbreaking. **Ms. van Zelm will draft a letter to student organizations that Mr. Lindsay identifies (done).**

The current total of member is 319 for a total of \$16,582 in dues and donations.

**4. Discussion of Social Media**

Kathleen Paterson, Partnership Special Projects Coordinator, showed the Committee the updated Partnership website and the proposed construction blog for Storrs Center.

Ms. Paterson said the Partnership has been using Constant Contact for a year to send monthly updates to its database. It allows for photos and links to be included. A person can sign up and also delete him or herself off the database.

Ms. Paterson said the new website was launched last week.

She noted that the "Become a Member" section is located on the homepage. She said that it has proven cost prohibitive to set up a pay on-line system. **Mr. Clouette asked about the Pay Pal system. Ms. Paterson will follow-up with the IT Department at the Town to see if this is possible.**

**Ms. Paterson said that she will add that the newsletter is a benefit of membership in the membership benefit section.**

She showed that the list of members are now on the website with a link to member businesses' websites, where available.

The "Contact Us" link goes to Cynthia van Zelm's e-mail.

Ms. Paterson said the Partnership has had a facebook page since December 2009. She showed the Committee the page. With facebook as much information as desired can be posted. The public can see the facebook page but you need to have a facebook account to comment.

Mr. Clouette asked if it is easier to update the website or the facebook page. Ms. Paterson said it is easier to update the facebook page right now but that will change when she begins to update the website directly. Currently, the Partnership sends information to the IT Dept. to update.

Dennis Heffley suggested adding links to the summer conferences. **Jim Hintz will talk to Steve Rugens about getting a list of the conferences so links can be established.**

Ms. Paterson said there will be a link for the new Storrs Center construction blog. She showed the blog and indicated that it will be the primary means of communication. The goal is for the Town, master developer LeylandAlliance, UConn and E.O. Smith to link to the blog. She said the construction team will give her info on a weekly basis to update the blog. The focus will be on letting people know what type of traffic issues might ensue in the next week.

Ms. Paterson showed as an example the Storrs Farmers Market twitter account. She said it is essentially a condensed version of the facebook Wall. However,

one can only write 140 characters at a time. She said she does not see an advantage to twitter for the Partnership.

Mr. McNabb asked if there was a web page on housing. Ms. van Zelm referenced the Storrs Center page. Mr. Hintz advocated that a housing and business link appear on the home page. He suggested that with respect to housing that there could be a placeholder with general information about housing and an indication that more information is forthcoming. He expressed concern that it is not intuitive for people to go to the Storrs Center page. Ms. Paterson and Ms. van Zelm said there is the continuing challenge of distinguishing the Partnership from Storrs Center, as the Partnership has a more comprehensive mission than Storrs Center.

The Committee thanked Ms. Paterson for her efforts.

## **5. Debrief Events and Follow-up on Outreach**

Ms. van Zelm said she has a conflict with the UConn Open House on Saturday. Ms. Paterson offered to staff the Open House.

Mr. Heffley and Mr. Clouette suggested that UConn stand out more on the Storrs Center maps because people know where UConn is and can use it as a reference point.

Mr. Hintz also reiterated that idea of adding “new downtown” where Storrs Center is referenced as some people do not know the term Storrs Center.

Mr. McNabb recommended holding off on any new articles until groundbreaking. Ms. Paterson said she had submitted an article to Horizons in February but did not know if it had appeared.

Mr. McNabb suggested an informational session with E.O. Smith High School. **Ms. van Zelm said she will talk to Lon Hultgren about doing this in the context of coordinating on construction issues with the High School.**

The Committee discussed distribution of membership brochures. Mr. Clouette volunteered to do this at the Library while Mr. Hintz volunteered to distribute at the Student Union, Lodewick Visitors Center, UConn Co-op and Wilbur Cross. Ms. van Zelm will keep brochures up to date at the Community Center and the Town Hall. Mr. Heffley also suggested the Willimantic Co-op. Betty Wexler asked if brochures could be left at Bradley Airport. **Ms. van Zelm will check with Candice Corcione at the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce if this is feasible. Ms. van Zelm will have brochures ready for distribution at the next meeting.**

Ms. van Zelm said she had sent a letter to the President of Joshua's Trust suggesting a meeting to update them on Storrs Center but had not heard from them.

**6. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting date is May 9 at 8 am.

**7. Adjourn**

Ms. Baldwin made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wexler seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 am.

*Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.*